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Egypt and the Soudan.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.*

Lord Cromer's report on the condition of Egypt for the year 1904 opens by mentioning the new era which has begun in the affairs of the country since the signing of the Anglo-French Agreement in April of last year. After touching in a few interesting paragraphs on the character of Arabi's revolution in 1882 and the subsequent development of the relations of Great Britain with Egypt, Lord Cromer states that, in his opinion, both England and France have gained by the Agreement; the position of the British Government in Egypt is now, from a political point of view, realised, the large French material interests are secured, and the civilised world has gained by the re-establishment of the most friendly relations between the two great Powers, so that the arrangement now arrived at may well give satisfaction to all those who are directly or indirectly concerned.

Lord Cromer tells us that his wish in the preparation of the Annual Reports has been to render them as educational as possible, and they are written with a special view to interest Egyptians in many subjects which concern them as citizens. The present report deals with a large variety of subjects of great importance, and deals with them in an exceedingly interesting manner. The year 1904 was "one of unexampled prosperity in Egypt," of such character that the same rate of material progress can hardly be hoped for in 1905, but Lord Cromer feels justified in expressing his belief that the year has opened under auspices peculiarly favourable to the cause of Egyptian progress and reform.

It is not the place here to refer to any of the subjects treated except the short paragraph relating to slavery, on which Lord Cromer writes:—

"In so far as Egypt proper is concerned, there is little of interest or importance to report under this head. Cases of kidnapping occur from time to time, but systematic traffic in slaves no longer exists. The number of Circassians brought into Egypt from Constantinople appears to be decreasing. This may be due to the fact that the rising generation of Egyptians is, in practice, less polygamous than their forefathers.

* Egypt No. 1 (1905).

"It cannot be doubted that a few slaves are still smuggled from the Egyptian to the Turkish side of the Red Sea. It is extremely difficult to put an entire stop to this traffic.

"Further, it almost always happens that, at the close of the pilgrim season, a considerable number of young slaves are shipped at Jeddah, Yambo, or Hodeidah, and conveyed through the Suez Canal, generally on Russian or Turkish vessels. An agent of the Slavery Department is always stationed at the quarantine station at Tor, and he sometimes hears of these cases. The slaves are then interviewed on their arrival at Suez and are offered their freedom, but they are terrorised by their masters, and invariably decline to leave the ship. Under such circumstances, nothing can be done to prevent them from proceeding on their journey.

"The slavery operations in the Soudan are treated in my Soudan Report."

Lord Cromer begins his report on the Soudan by dwelling on the vast extent of the country, the general condition of its inhabitants, and the main features of the system of government.

"Owing to the difficulties of communication, the vast tracts of country which lie away from the banks of the main rivers are practically closed to all but a very few. Some of these tracts, indeed, are, as yet, unexplored. I shall give some idea of the size of the country if I say that from Wadi Halfa to Gondokoro is about 1,200 miles as the crow flies, and that from the Darfour frontier, on the west, to the Abyssinian frontier, on the east, is a distance of nearly 1,000 miles. The Province of Kordofan, alone, which is governed by some thirty British and Egyptian officials, covers an area greater than the whole of France.

"It is clear that, apart from all other considerations, the physical difficulties arising from distance and the absence of communications must impose a limit to the speed with which civilised methods of government can be introduced into this huge tract of country. Those difficulties are enhanced by the climate, by the nature of the soil, a large portion of which consists of desert, by the character of the inhabitants, and by the deep-rooted mistrust of the intentions of their Rulers, which has been the natural outcome of a long course of misgovernment.

"A large number of the inhabitants of the Soudan, namely, those who inhabit the southern provinces, are pagan savages. They are often a fine race, and are not devoid of the barbaric virtues which are sometimes to be found amongst savages. Save in some localities . . . their sole knowledge of the outer world was, until recently, derived from the experience gained when Arab raiders descended on their villages, murdered many of the inhabitants, and carried off others into slavery.

"The majority of the remaining inhabitants of the Soudan, though they can scarcely be called utter savages—inasmuch as they have made one distinct step forward in having embraced the Moslem religion—are in so backward a condition of civilisation as to be but slightly removed from savagery."

The Administration of such a country "must necessarily be bureaucratic, not to say despotic, in its character," but a system of decentralisation, to the utmost extent possible, is carried out.

Of the results which have been so far achieved Lord Cromer writes that, while the Soudan can scarcely yet be said to have passed out of the initial stage of development, the results, considering the difficulties, the condition of the country under its previous rulers, and the shortness of time since the country was brought under civilising influences, are "eminently satisfactory."

"Save, possibly, in the most remote portions of the Bahr-el-Ghazal—which, as I shall presently explain, are to a certain extent still unsettled—perfect tranquillity prevails in the interior of the country. Slatin Pasha—who is, perhaps, the highest living authority on Soudan affairs, and who has visited the most remote districts of the country, writes:—

"I think it is no exaggeration to say that, if it were not for the possible danger of attack by wild animals, any individual could pass unarmed through the whole country under the Soudan Government."

"The people are gradually gaining confidence in the intentions of the Government. Suspicions—such as that they are to be carried away into slavery, or compelled against their will to serve in the army—still linger, but they are gradually disappearing. A Government official is no longer regarded as an enemy, at whose approach the population turn to flight."

TRADE.

"Trade is developing, even under the adverse circumstances which now exist. It will, without doubt, develop still further when the Nile-Red Sea Railway, and the line which will place the Dongola Province in direct communication with the Red Sea, are completed. Both lines are expected to be opened for traffic about a year hence. Money has been granted to create a new port on the coast, which will be both more convenient and more easy of access than the present harbour of Suakin. As much as is possible under the circumstances is being done in the way of road construction. The child population is increasing, and thus in course of time the fearful waste of life arising from war and disease will be repaired. The revenue is steadily increasing. It has now reached a figure of over half a million, in spite of the adoption of a system of taxation which imposes very light burthens on the people. The Slave Trade is being gradually crushed out of existence, and the hold which the institution of domestic slavery has on the minds of the people is being perceptibly weakened."

Lord Cromer pays a warm tribute to "the fine body of officials, civil and military, who are now engaged in introducing the elements of civilisation into the Soudan," when he states that their keen interest in their work justifies the belief "that the results already obtained are merely an earnest of those which will come hereafter."

SLAVERY.

The following report shows that much has been done by the Slavery Department to put down raiding and dealing in slaves, and that the success attained during the past year is considerable. We are glad to learn that domestic slavery as a status is gradually disappearing.

"Slave-raiding in the Eastern Soudan received a severe blow at the beginning of last year at the hands of Colonel Gorringe, the late Moudir of Senaar. It was through the strategy and energy of this officer that Ibrahim Wad Mahmoud, the most cruel of the slave-raiders, was captured and hanged, the greater part of his followers annihilated, and their stronghold destroyed. 'I venture to say,' Captain McMurdo, the head of the Slavery Department, writes, 'that never again will the Eastern Soudan harbour such a villainous band of marauding slave-raiders.'

"The Slavery Department has now established several small posts in the country that used to be terrorised by Ibrahim Wad Mahmoud and his followers, so that, for the time being, actual slave-raiding has ceased to exist.

"The country which suffered most from these marauders lies to the west of the Blue Nile, and is inhabited by the Borun negroes. Little was known about this people; they have a dialect of their own, and do not speak Arabic; no one had penetrated into their country. After the defeat of Ibrahim Wad Mahmoud, Mr. Gorringe, an Inspector of the Slavery Department, went on a long patrol through the Borun country, and struck the White Nile a little north of its junction with the Sobat. He subsequently wrote an interesting Report on his journey. 'It is pitiable,' Captain McMurdo says, in commenting on this Report, 'to read of the devastation wrought by Ibrahim Wad Mahmoud among the Borun people. In the sphere which he raided, there were no children left, the proportion of adults is about seven men to one woman, and the villages were devoid of sheep, goats, poultry and cattle. The joy of these people at the destruction of the slave raider and his followers is easier to imagine than to describe.'

"In the Eastern Soudan, a certain amount of kidnapping is still going on, and the extent of the country to be guarded is so great that it is very difficult to put an entire stop to this practice. From Kassala to the Red Sea, there is a continuous range of rugged mountains, inhabited by the Gemelab tribe, who are very old offenders, and the facility with which they can harbour slaves encourages the kidnapping traffic.*

"The kidnapping that was formerly carried on, to some extent, round and about the Berber district has been greatly checked by the Moudir and his subordinates. It is very probable that in Omdurman there is a considerable remnant of the old slave-trading community, who do not lose a chance of trafficking whenever possible, but a close watch is kept on them and the trade is not active.

* Since I wrote the above, information has been received from which it would appear that there is a fair prospect of putting a stop to the practices heretofore followed by the Gemelab tribe.

"The Province of Dongola,' Captain McMurdo writes, 'is most satisfactory, and the Bisharin find it almost hopeless to carry on their old practices. This result is not only due to Colonel Jackson's great energy in the matter, but partly also to the system of registration of blacks, which is efficiently kept up throughout the Moudirieh. I have no hesitation in saying that the more efficiently this system is worked, the less kidnapping there will be in the Soudan.'

"Captain McMurdo concludes his Report in the following terms:—

"No information that I have received leads me to suppose that Slave Traffic has increased in Kordofan. On the other hand, I doubt there being any great decrease. The riverain Arabs certainly carry on the trade, and I am now endeavouring to check them by the co-operation of the Ghezireh and Kordofan forces on the river bank.

"I have not been able to visit personally the Bahr-el-Ghazal and southern districts, as I have considered them too far from my base, but when the machinery of the Department is in good working order, I shall hope to control any traffic that may exist there. From time to time I hear from Soudan officials of slave-raiding cases that have taken place, but I am led to conclude that these are carried on more in the way of reprisals arising from tribal quarrels than for purposes of export.'

"All that Captain McMurdo says is confirmed by the reports of the Governors of the various provinces. There can be no doubt that the Slave Trade, though it has as yet by no means been stamped out, has received a very great check in the Soudan. The people have learned to respect, and also to dread, the slavery laws. Seventeen persons were convicted of dealing in slaves during the course of the past year. Of these, one (Ibrahim Wad Mahmoud) was sentenced to death for murder and rebellion. The remaining sixteen were condemned to various terms of imprisonment. The fear which the application of the law has inspired produces, without doubt, a salutary effect on the whole, but it sometimes leads to sad consequences. Thus, Mr. Bonham-Carter reports two very brutal cases of murder, the victims being, in one case a woman, and in the other a boy, who were made away with in order to prevent their appearance as witnesses in slavery cases.

DOMESTIC SLAVERY.

"As regards domestic slavery, as distinguished from the Slave Trade, as much progress as could reasonably be expected is being made in eradicating this institution from the country. On this subject Sir Reginald Wingate writes:—

"By carefully protecting the interests of those who were previously slaves, and at the same time gradually employing them on remunerative work in other capacities—should they be unwilling to return to their masters as ordinary servants—we shall, eventually, with the concurrence and assistance of the inhabitants themselves, gradually transform the status of slavery, and substitute for it a system of paid labour, which will probably be acceptable to master and servant alike.'"

We were told in last year's report that the Abyssinian frontier was generally in a very disturbed state, and that this district was one of the centres of anti-slavery operations. The demarcation of this eastern frontier has resulted in the strengthening of the hold of the Government on the wild and lawless tribes on both sides of the boundary.

LABOUR.

"In spite of the new requirements which have sprung up in consequence of railway construction and other recent work, no serious difficulty has as yet been found in obtaining an adequate supply of labour. As the country progresses, however, it seems difficult to believe that the labour question will not arise in a more or less acute form."

TAXATION.

In the course of a section on the financial situation of the Soudan Government, which is very satisfactory, Lord Cromer makes some observations of a noteworthy character on the importance of avoiding a system of high taxation. This is a principle of the truth of which Lord Cromer declares he is very strongly convinced.

"In deciding what general policy is to be adopted in countries such as Egypt and the Soudan, low taxation should be the keystone of the political arch. It brings general tranquillity in its train. It is an essential preliminary to steady and continuous moral and material improvement. It allows, either at once or eventually, of the adoption, without serious danger to the State, of a policy in other matters which is in general conformity with the liberal views and traditions of the British Government and of the British nation. Expenditure on objects, however desirable in themselves, should, I venture to think, be rejected, or at all events postponed, rather than that the principle of maintaining taxes at a low figure should be in any degree infringed. That is the policy which, for more than twenty years, has been adopted in Egypt and for some seven years in the Soudan. . . . The counter-policy of high State expenditure, which is often urged upon the governing authorities from many influential quarters, is often, to all outward appearance, more productive of immediate consequences. On the other hand, I venture to maintain that the advantages secured by the former are far more solid and durable than any which can be obtained under the latter plan of action. I trust, therefore, that, whoever in the future may be responsible for the government of Egypt or of the Soudan, will on no account—whether the pressure be local, or whether it emanates from abroad—allow himself to be hurried."

THE NILE-RED SEA RAILWAY.

Lord Cromer has often dwelt upon the importance for the Soudan of the construction of a railway from Berber to Suakin. Rapid progress has now been made in building this line, which ought to be finished in the spring of 1906. The terminus of the railway, however, is to be not at Suakin, but at a place to the north of Suakin, called Sheikh Barghout, which will in future be known as Port Soudan.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SOUDAN.

Once again Lord Cromer refers to General Gordon's remark in 1884 as to the uselessness of the Soudan as a possession, which was endorsed by Colonel Stewart's opinion. Since last year, Lord Cromer writes, we have conclusive proof that the Soudan is "a priceless possession to Egypt," for it is now known, since the publication of Sir William Garstin's report on the subject, that the Power which holds the head waters of the Nile commands the supply of Egypt, and on this the whole future development of the country depends.

The reports of the Governors of Provinces, which Lord Cromer quotes, witness to a growing ability on the part of the native populations to profit by a good administration, a diminution of crime, and an increase in contentment and general prosperity, as the result of the suppression of brigandage and raiding.



The Transvaal Labour Question.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.*

THE Blue Book published on May 1st contains a variety of information relating principally to Chinese labour. Some interesting statistics are also given on the mortality among the native mine-workers, and some reports on general native affairs.

As regards the number of Chinese, the Superintendent, Mr. W. Evans, stated in February last that it was not proposed to set any limit, though the Mines are expected to be content with 55,000 men.

The reply of the Colonial Secretary to a recent question on this subject in the House of Commons is reported on another page.

But it is noteworthy that whereas, in the first instance, the Chinese were asked for as a temporary expedient, to meet a labour crisis, we are now frankly told by such a representative of the gold-mining interest as Lord Harris that the Chinaman has come to stay as long as the Rand lasts, and even Lord Milner speaks of China supplying "an amount of unskilled labour which will enable the mining interest to be steadily developed." The pretext which helped the mine-owners to attain their object is thus unceremoniously set aside, having served its purpose.

Several despatches in this Blue Book relate to the rioting which has taken place among the coolies, and a report on the disturbances of last year was furnished in September, in which the Superintendent of Foreign Labour makes light of these as due to misunderstandings. Most of them, he says, subsided as quickly as they began.

* Cd. 2401.

More riots have, however, since taken place among the coolies on at least two of the compounds, owing, it is said, to disputes as to wages and the interpretation of the labourers' contract. In the disturbances which took place on April 1st and 9th it is officially stated that there was no firing, no lives were lost, and "casualties were practically *nil*," but 59 ringleaders were arrested on the first occasion at the Randfontein Mine, and a Transvaal newspaper speaks of fighting going on for nearly two hours, describing "a furious *mêlée*," in which 2,000 infuriated Chinese made a concerted attack on the police.

Returns are given of convictions and sentences on Chinese labourers, the offences being chiefly desertion, travelling without permit, theft, assault (not many cases), riot, and *refusal to work*. The number of men convicted of this last offence, and sentenced to fines or terms of imprisonment, varying from seven days to two months, during the second half of 1904 was 92.

The arrangements made for the introduction of the Chinese and the provision made for their comfort are described in glowing terms by Mr. W. Evans. Many of them, he tells us, earn very good pay and spend freely, indulging in such luxuries as cigarettes, bicycles, aerated waters, watches, and European clothes. As regards the restrictions:—

"The compound itself is by no means a prison. It is closed by a big gate, but the gate is always open, except at night, and the labourer is free to walk in and out as he pleases. He is legally and practically entitled to go where he pleases on the mine premises, which in some cases extend to miles. He is warned by notices put up on boards at the mine limits that he must go no further without a permit, yet he frequently goes on out of idle curiosity until stopped by a policeman."

The Superintendent is specially sensitive on the point of the freedom which the coolies enjoy and the allegations of slavery which have been made.

"The cry of slavery," he writes, "has touched me personally. . . . The labourers are as free as any man under an agreement can be. They may terminate their contract at any moment on refunding the expenses of bringing them here and taking them back and are not in any way liable if by so doing they utterly disorganise the work of the mine."

When we consider that the *stipend* payable would be, at the very least, £16, and that the poverty of the ordinary Chinese coolie is such that, as the defenders of the Ordinance have assured us, a daily wage of 1s. or 1s. 6d. appears to them extremely high pay, it does not seem that the termination of the contract is quite so simple as Mr. Evans assumes.

As regards the comparative numbers of white and coloured labourers employed on the mines, Lord Milner wrote a despatch, in reply to Mr. Lyttelton's request for an explanation, in February last. He does not attempt to contest the figures, which showed that the proportion of white to coloured labourers.

was decreasing, but states frankly that if there were a sufficiency of skilled white labour and cheap unskilled labour the proportion of whites would be as low as 1 to 14. Lord Milner says, indeed, that this must not be taken to mean that the white man is being ousted by the coloured; it is not advisable "for economic reasons" to employ Europeans at high wages to do manual labour if abundant cheap coloured labour can be had, and he significantly adds, "Our reefs, which are of low grade, could not be profitably worked under such conditions."

The Governor concludes by saying that, as far as can be gathered, the European workmen do not resent the employment of the Chinese, but are aware that, if the latter were sent away, some 3,000 white workers would be thrown out of employment.

In contrast with Lord Milner's statement, however, we notice that Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P., who has recently paid a visit to the Transvaal, and who speaks with special authority on mining questions, has published a pamphlet on Chinese labour in the Rand mines, in the course of which he denies that, as is so frequently stated, opposition to the importation has completely ceased. Of all the miners he conversed with he says that only one approved of the bringing over of the Chinese coolies.

"Among working-men of all trades I found general, unabated hostility; even some directors of mining companies whom I met in Johannesburg—themselves strongly favourable to the Ordinance—frankly admitted that it never could have been passed in any freely elected Parliament."

He further testifies that "the proportion of white to coloured workmen in the mines is steadily and continuously diminishing, whatever may be the fluctuation in the actual numbers employed from month to month."

In spite of the excellent arrangements made for the food and lodging of the coolies, Mr. Burt maintains that the conditions under which they live and work are

"entirely inconsistent with the dignity, freedom, and independence of labour as understood by British working-men and the British people. . . . The sentinels stationed at every gateway, the three years' exile from country, home, wife, and family suggest the penal settlement rather than free life and free labour."

This point was also emphasised by Lord Stanmore in the instructive debate which took place in the Upper House on May 16th. He said that when he read the descriptions given of the compounds "he seemed to be reading some of the accounts of his old Inspector of Prisons in Ceylon." Lord Stanmore is not an opponent of Chinese labour in general, but he repeated that the regulations for the Rand differ from those in force elsewhere, and if the same laws as to the proportion of men and women immigrants prevailed in South Africa as in other colonies, the number of Chinese men would be only six! [According to the Blue Book only two families have been introduced].

Other points which are worthy of note in this interesting debate were the ground taken by Lord Lansdowne that the employment of the coolies was a very serious experiment carried out as a necessity to prevent the collapse of the mining industry, that the experiment had so far saved the mining industry from ruin, and the Government intended to continue it "under proper precautions and with due watchfulness." Lord Lansdowne was unable to respond to the challenge of Lord Carrington, who asked the Foreign Secretary to declare his conscientious belief that the Chinese policy was one consistent with the high ideals of British prestige and statesmanship, and was in the best interests of the nation. The Government complain that the arguments used against Chinese labour are familiar, not to say stale. But if, as we believe, the true grounds of objection to it are those broadly indicated by the challenge referred to, or, as the Bishop of Hereford put it, that the Ordinance represents "a reversion to a lower type of legislation," then the arguments must of necessity be repeated, and must grow familiar through repetition. In other words, objection is taken on high moral grounds not to this or that detail of the Ordinance, but to the whole character and trend of the policy, which, as Lord Coleridge pointed out, is giving the Government of the Transvaal into the hands of a huge trust, which is obtaining vast wealth by the labour of aliens imported under contracts which would be illegal in this country.

The theory that the use of Chinese labour increases the demand for white labour is contested by Mr. F. H. P. Creswell in a recent pamphlet, entitled *The Chinese Labour Question from Within*, where he examines the figures and comes to a directly opposite conclusion. He considers it truer to say that under present conditions "the opportunities for white men to find employment are increased by a scarcity of coloured labour, and are diminished when the supply of coloured labour is largely increased by Chinese importation."

He holds that if "the old indentured semi-servile labour system" is to give place to development of a freer and an European type, it must be by holding to natural limits on the supply of native coloured labour, and refusing indefinitely to increase the supply by unlimited importation of Asiatic labour.

As regards the allegation of slavery in connection with Chinese labour, Mr. Creswell puts the case well. He frankly admits that the "slavery cry," which rests on the idea that the coolies are badly housed, ill-fed, or in other ways cruelly treated, is quite mistaken. But he rightly emphasises the evil and debasing effect which the indenture system is bound to have on the race which makes its prosperity dependent on the hard work done by an inferior race.

"In my opinion," he says, "there is no essential difference at all between it and slavery. . . . I have been too much in contact with natives not to know

that the man and brother theory has its very distinct limitations. . . . But precisely because this is so, it seems to me the more important to keep constantly before our eyes the, so far as I know, universal teaching of history, that anything in the nature of slavery in the relations of a superior race towards an inferior race with which it is brought in contact has, by some inevitable law of nature, resulted in the deterioration and downfall of the ruling race."

The health of the coolies seems to have been good on the whole. The death rate to the end of Jan. 7 was 23.16, or, excluding deaths from beri-beri, 15.4 per 1,000 per annum.

This is considerably lower than the rate of mortality amongst natives.

NATIVE MORTALITY.

A report for the year ending June 30th, 1904, shows that the total death-rate among natives employed on mines and works was 59.11 per 1,000, being about 80 in the last half of 1903 and 40.55 for the first half of 1904. Ill-treatment was not, the Acting Commissioner for Native Affairs writes, the primary cause of the high death-rate, which was due to extreme severe seasonal conditions, the bad physique of natives recruited, and the careless habits of the natives. The report goes on to say that the mining companies generally have satisfied the Commissioner by the endeavours made to improve the living conditions of their native employés, and all reports show that in the matter of diet and medical attendance the conditions are satisfactory, but

"There can be no doubt that in certain compounds and hospitals much still remains to be done. Whilst therefore considerable improvements have unquestionably been effected, it is recognised that the conditions on many of the mines have not yet been placed upon a satisfactory footing."

In acknowledging this report the Colonial Secretary recalls the statement of the mine doctors that the adoption of their recommendations ought to reduce the death-rate to at least 40 per thousand, and urges that every effort be made to this end.

REPORT ON NATIVE AFFAIRS.

Sir Godfrey Lagden submits a report on this subject for the year ending June 30th, 1904, which begins with some interesting general observations. During the year the natives have proved themselves law-abiding, and submissive to Government. The amount of crime is not large in proportion to the population, except (a significant exception) at mining centres like the Witwatersrand. Sir G. Lagden refers to "a wave of unrest" which spread through the Eastern and Northern Transvaal, and led to "a good deal of unnecessary excitement, which took a considerable time to allay, and has not tended to improve the relations between Europeans and natives."

Natives should be encouraged to settle on the land, but many who ought to be working on the land are attracted away by high pay to the large industrial centres.

The Government's policy is to bring the races into harmony as far as possible. The native question is "a great problem not to be approached in a spirit of irritation, nor aggravated by intolerance." The end desired cannot be attained by short cuts, or by sudden and violent changes.

BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA NATIVES.

It is not definitely stated that this experiment has been given up, but the Pass Commissioner, in his report of August, 1904, states that since their arrival in the Transvaal, in June, 1903, the condition of the men has generally been bad, a large proportion being scorbutic. Out of 925 originally recruited only 453 (less than half) were employed on the mines on June 30th, 1904. The death-rate was terribly high (118 out of 925), but it is stated that 50 per cent. of the deaths occurred within three months of the men's arrival on the mines. The Pass Commissioner adds--

"As regards their suitability for mine labour opinions differ, but the general consensus of opinion would appear to be that once they have become accustomed to their work they have proved good workmen, of intelligence above the average, and of physique which compares well with that of the best of other tribes."

It will be remembered that the Chamber of Mines had permission last year to engage 5,000 more labourers from British Central Africa, but they were not to arrive until after the winter and the coldest weather were over. Nothing more seems to have been heard of the carrying on of the experiment, and it seems likely from the Colonial Secretary's answer to a recent question in the House of Commons that it is to cease.



The Treatment of Natives of Western Australia.

THE report of Dr. Roth, the Chief Protector of Aborigines in Queensland, who was last year commissioned by the Government of Western Australia to inquire into the administration of the Aborigines Department and the employment and treatment of aborigines, is a very startling one, revealing facts of a shocking and most deplorable character.

Some of the worst disclosures relate to the treatment of native prisoners, and the very defective police system, but the entire question of the employment of the natives, whether with or without contracts, has been shamefully neglected. The Aborigines Department has wholly insufficient powers, and the Chief Protector has felt that he cannot even enforce the present imperfect Acts, nor insist on the correction of existing evils.

Briefly, the result of the Inquiry is to show that, whether under contracts or without them, the employment of aborigines is attended by evils of the gravest kind. Those who work under contracts are very inadequately pro-

tected, "there being nothing," in the words of the Report, "to prevent the greatest scoundrel unhung, European or Asiatic, putting under contract any blacks he pleases." But natives are far more often employed without any contract at all, no wages are given, and "the native is practically forced to work for his so-called master."

Contracts are not supervised by the Protector of Aborigines or the Police, and in cases of their breach, the natives are disproportionately punished, receiving sentences of imprisonment up to three months, while employers can only be fined.

As a matter of fact, indeed, a conviction against an employer for breach of contract is unknown.

The system of indenturing children also leads to gross abuses. Any native or half-caste child may be indentured by a Resident Magistrate to a master or mistress until the age of 21 years, and no education and no wages are stipulated for in the indenture. Children are often indentured without permission from the Department and without its knowledge; no register of indentureships is kept, and no regulations are in force to protect the interests of the children so bound, who are practically never visited or looked after in any way.

Then as regards the treatment of native prisoners, ninety per cent. of whom are arrested for the offence of cattle killing, the evidence which the Commissioner received in this connection, "demonstrates," as he describes it, "a most brutal and outrageous condition of affairs."

Blacks may be arrested without authority, and on merely verbal information, and, in order to secure a summary dealing with the charge, the accused are made to plead guilty, if need be, at the muzzle of the rifle. No witnesses are ever called for the defence, although the accused often fail to understand the charge. The whole trial is of a farcical character, for as a Resident Magistrate stated in his evidence—

"I think, and have seen it, that a man will plead guilty now for killing a beast some time ago. The native cannot separate two charges on two beasts, and will still have the same offence in his mind; if he kills a bullock once he will plead guilty to every subsequent charge of killing a bullock, no matter how often he will be charged with it."

Mr. Woodroffe, another witness, declared himself satisfied in his own mind that the blacks never have a fair trial. During the time that he was in Wyndham he stated that he did not see one case of justice, and the trial of natives was "a perfect farce." He had walked out of the Court "disgusted at what is called British justice."

Further, actual physical cruelty is inflicted on the natives arrested. In the northern part of the State, blacks, including children of from 14 to 16 years, are chained by the neck, and the chains are fastened by handcuffs or

iron split-links; these latter can only be opened by a long and tedious process, and in case of accidents it was admitted that the use of these split-links might cause the death of a whole batch of prisoners. The use of neck-chains is a degrading feature also of the prison system, and they are usually employed for the whole of a prisoner's term. Natives even work in chains in the hot sun for six, seven, or eight hours daily. The system of long sentences is considered a failure, as regards any reformatory effect upon the prisoners.

The police make a profit by the natives arrested, for they receive from 1s. 6½d. to 2s. 5d. daily a head, and the native food supplied only costs them a small part of this sum. Each aboriginal thus has a money value to the escorting officer, and so

"It is not surprising to find that little boys of immature age have been brought in to give evidence, that children varying in age between 10 and 16 are charged with killing cattle, that blacks do not realise what they are sentenced for, that an old and feeble native arrives at the end of his journey in a state of collapse, and dies 18 days after admission into gaol. . . . It is no secret that the police say, if the ration allowance was cut down or taken away they would not arrest so many natives. By their own assertions, every native caught means more money in their pocket."

The police are also used, quite illegally, to hunt up and bring back runaway blacks to their employers.

Young children from 10 to 16 are sentenced to terms of imprisonment or hard labour for alleged cattle killing; some, however, were released when the Commissioner called the attention of the Executive to their cases.

Native women are illegally arrested, not on the charge of killing cattle, but as witnesses, and are practically asked to turn informers, without the least knowledge of what they are doing. Such women are subjected to grave outrage at the hands of the police, stockmen and trackers.

No provision is made for the care of unprotected native women and children, though the aboriginal and half-caste children left to themselves only drift into a life of vagabondage or gaol.

Appalling abuses exist in connection with the employment of natives in the pearl fishery, and drunkenness, prostitution, and disease are rife along the whole coast line where the fishing is carried on.

One main cause of the cattle killing of which the natives are guilty is the occupation of the reserve lands which serve as native hunting grounds. Kangaroos are the chief native food, and these are shot down by the kangaroo hunters in great numbers, so that the aborigines are deprived of their food supply and driven to kill cattle and sheep.

These are some of the chief evils to which this terrible report calls attention.

Mr. Prinsep, the Chief Protector of Aborigines, stated in his evidence that he had continually been agitating for an enlargement of the law, and trying to "stretch the present vague and imperfect law." In making these representations he had not been encouraged.

"From the first taking over the duties of the department, I saw," Mr. Prinsep stated, "that the laws in existence were exceedingly imperfect, and rendered the department unable to cope with the irregularities and improprieties in the intercourse between natives and whites."

In 1899 he framed a Bill with the greatest care, by which action could be taken against the universal prostitution and tendency to drunkenness, and to supervise native employment. In spite of the approval of leading Government officials and public people, Mr. Prinsep was met with indifference, and then almost adverse criticism. He persevered in his efforts, however, but nothing was done until, under the last Government, his Bill was given a chance of becoming law, after a four years' fight.

The Commissioner sums up his report by saying that in the settled areas of those portions of the State investigated (his inquiries were mainly confined to the aborigines in the northern and north-western areas), he is

"satisfied that the natives, speaking generally, are not subject to any actual physical cruelty. On the other hand, the wrongs and injustices taking place in these areas, and the cruelties and abuses met with in the unsettled districts, cannot be longer hidden or tolerated. Fortunately they are of such a nature that they can be largely remedied by proper legislation, combined with firm departmental supervision."

Dr. Roth recommends detailed legislation on all the points mentioned, including the abandonment of the indenture system, the education of children of school age by employers to be made compulsory, the police to be prevented from hunting up fugitives except under a proper warrant, the abolition of neck-chains, an alteration in the system of allowing the police to draw "blood-money" for each native prisoner, and the establishment of reserves for native hunting grounds. The irregularities in connection with the distribution of relief and the supply of liquor to natives also call for legislation.

The Commissioner earnestly prays, on the eve of his departure from Western Australia, that the Aborigines Bill of 1904, supplemented by his recommendations, may become the Aborigines Act of 1905.

The subject was brought up in the House of Commons by Mr. J. Campbell at the end of March, when the Colonial Secretary agreed in deploring the scandals revealed by the Report, which, he said, no one could read of without a feeling of the greatest abhorrence. But it must be remembered that Western Australia was a self-governing colony, which was, in its internal affairs, substantially independent. He understood that full legislation on the subject

was to be carried this year, and he entirely agreed with the Commissioner in hoping that the Bill, already brought forward, would become an Act of Parliament without delay.

Attention was also called to the Report in the House of Lords on May 9th, when the Archbishop of Canterbury opened the discussion in a strong and yet temperate speech, describing the general system of treatment of the natives as one "which seemed to belong to an age utterly different from that in which we lived." He spoke wisely of the importance not only of civilising the natives, but of raising the standard of the sense of responsibility among the white people.

It is satisfactory to find the Primate thus speaking out upon this question, as it is well known that the Episcopal Bench has, especially in the past, been by no means prominent in the fight against slavery.

Lord Tennyson, in the same debate, referred to "the great wave of indignation which had swept over Australia" in consequence of Dr. Roth's revelations, and the Duke of Marlborough spoke of the strong desire of the Government to see steps taken to end these gross native disabilities. He thought that the Government of Western Australia, having themselves appointed this Commission, which had not been forced upon them from outside, showed that they were fully alive to the gravity of the situation, and Ministers of the Colony would themselves introduce a bill for carrying out Dr. Roth's recommendations. Meanwhile, His Majesty's Government were informed that all was being done that could possibly be done under the existing regulations to prevent a recurrence of the abuses.

Parliamentary.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *February 23.*

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.

DR. MACNAMARA asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, having regard to the fact that over 27,000 Chinese coolies were now on the Rand, that 7,500 more had been already recruited, and that 50,000 in all were expected to be on the Rand by June, and to the fact that Sir George Farrar, in commending the introduction of the Chinese coolies to the people of the Transvaal, mentioned from 20,000 to 30,000 coolies as the limit of requirement, and to the fact that Lord Lansdowne in another place gave the assurance, on February 12, 1904, that the proposal of the Government was to try the experiment of introducing Chinese coolies to the Transvaal on a limited scale, he would now put a limit to the further importation of Chinese coolies into the Transvaal.

Mr. LYTTTELTON—The hon. member does not appear to have rightly quoted Sir George Farrar's statement to the Legislative Council. I am not prepared to set a limit as suggested; but I understand that the present requirements of the mines are for no more than 55,000 Chinese, and that after that number has been introduced the rate of increase, if increase there be, will be very moderate. The cost of recruiting and maintenance of the Chinese is very heavy in comparison with the Kaffir, and it is obvious that ordinary prudence will dictate that the introduction of Chinese should be limited to supplementing the deficiency between the number of Kaffirs who can be obtained and the total number of unskilled labourers which the mines may require. The experiment and all its consequences have received and are receiving the closest attention of the Transvaal Government and His Majesty's Government, and we have no doubt that the representative Government about to be introduced with even better opportunities for vigilance will scrupulously maintain that attitude.

Dr. MACNAMARA—Is the right hon. gentleman aware that on February 12 of last year Lord Onslow in another place, on behalf of the Government, stated that the number of importations would be limited to 10,000?

The SPEAKER—That question is not in order.

Major SEELY—Is the House to understand that the Government propose to put no limit of any kind to the importation of Chinese? (Cheers).

Mr. LYTTTELTON—That was not my answer to the question.

April 17.

In reply to Mr. ALLEN,

Mr. LYTTTELTON said—A Chinese Consul has been appointed in the Transvaal. His name is Liu Yu-Lin. (Laughter). He will reside at Johannesburg. The interests of the Chinese coolies are and will continue to be looked after by the Superintendent of Foreign Labour and his staff as well as by the Chinese Consul when he arrives.

March 7.

BRITISH CONSULS IN THE UPPER CONGO.

Sir G. PARKER asked the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the insecurity to the life and property of British subjects in the Upper Congo, he would consider the advisability of taking steps to appoint Consuls with jurisdiction powers at Leopoldville, Stanley Falls, and elsewhere.

Earl PERCY—The information at the disposal of His Majesty's Government does not appear to justify the description given by the hon. member in the first paragraph of his question; but it is proposed to appoint two additional Vice-Consuls to reside at Leopoldville and Stanley Falls.

LABOUR IN TRANSVAAL MINES.

March 8.

Mr. WEIR asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he would state how many of the natives recruited from the British Central Africa Protectorate for labour in the Transvaal had arrived at the mines, how many had succumbed to disease, and how many had returned home.

Mr. LYTTLETON—The latest information I have received states that 1,385 have gone to the mines, that 134 have succumbed to disease, and that 709 have returned home, the rest not having completed their period of work. I have recently informed Lord Milner that he will no doubt agree with me that if this rate of mortality continues the experiment must cease. I believe the mortality has recently not been so heavy.

April 3.

SLAVERY IN EAST AFRICA.

Sir CHARLES DILKE asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he could state whether, on the transfer to the Colonial Office of the East Africa Protectorate, inquiry could be made as to the possibility of abolishing in the coast strip the legal status of slavery, in accordance with the policy hitherto general in the colonies and protectorates under the Colonial Office as well as in India.

Mr. LYTTLETON—Inquiry will be made, but it will be remembered that we are bound by an assurance which was given by Lord Kimberley, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1895, to the effect that the Law of Islam would be maintained.

[This is not the first time that this assurance has been put forward by the Government as a reason why no further action can be taken against slavery on the Zanzibar Coast strip. The undertaking referred to was given in a speech by Sir Lloyd Mathews to the Arabs at Mombasa in 1895, when he stated that "all ancient customs would be allowed to continue."

From published letters which passed between Mr. J. A. Pease, M.P., and the Earl of Kimberley, in 1900, it is clear that Sir Arthur Hardinge had been authorised to give an assurance on taking over the administration of the mainland territory in 1895, that, "as regards religion and law and the Sultan's sovereignty, no difference was made by the change," but that the question of slavery was not directly dealt with at that time. Thus it also appears to be clear that Sir Lloyd Mathews' words went beyond the assurance which he was authorised by the Government to give, but they have allowed his statement to remain uncorrected ever since, and although they have pledged themselves in the meantime to extend the policy of abolition of the legal status of slavery to the Coast Territory, they have found it convenient to take advantage of their own neglect to refuse any further step towards the emancipation of the slaves in this portion of a British Protectorate.

Ed. A. F. Reporter]

We are very glad to learn from Lord Percy's statement in the House of Commons that the Government are proposing to appoint two Vice-Consuls in the Congo State, at Leopoldville and Stanley Falls respectively.

We hope that this is only a beginning, and that more representatives will be appointed for Angola and French Congo.

The West African Section of the London Chamber of Commerce has passed the following resolution :

"British Consulates in Central Africa.—That a letter be addressed to his Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, calling attention to the inadequacy of the provision for Consular representation of his Majesty's Government in the Congo Basin, and suggesting that arrangements may be made for a considerable addition to his Majesty's Consular officials in that part of Africa."

Slave Trade in Tripoli.

THE report of the Anti-Slavery Society of Italy shows that in 1904 137 slaves were freed in Benghazi, which is a principal station for the caravans coming from the Wadai country, each of which carries a greater or smaller consignment of slaves from the interior of Africa. About 60 of these slaves were freed directly by the Consulates of Italy, Great Britain, and France; no figures are given of slaves liberated by the agents of the Society at other stations.

Mention is made of the case of the slave woman Zeidel Mal, about whom our Society, by request of the Italian Society, wrote to Lord Lansdowne, and who was released on the representation of the British Consul-General to the Vali of Tripoli in April of last year.

Commenting on the facts which were communicated to our Society at the end of last year by the sister Society in Rome, and which were made known by our Society to the British Foreign Office, regarding the various methods by which the Turkish authorities contrive to evade the Brussels Act, and prevent slaves from the interior from becoming really free, the Roman newspaper *Giornale d'Italia* expresses the hope that the Italian Government will be associated with the British Government in "the noble initiative taken on behalf of so humanitarian a work," since it considers that it would be deplorable if the Italian Government were to be inactive in a country so interesting, inhabited by so many Italians. The article refers to a recent case of the kidnapping of a negro baby from an Italian orphan asylum by a Turkish official, and concludes :—

"It would be deplorable, we repeat, if the excellent Society which holds the prestige of our name high in Tripoli, saving every year hundreds of slaves, should see an injustice committed against an Italian institution remedied by means of a non-Italian authority in spite of the favourable reports which pass from the said Society to our Government."

Our Committee has now received a confidential reply to the letter which it forwarded to Lord Lansdowne in February, and a précis of reports sent home by the British Consul-General in Tripoli.

It is much to be hoped that now this matter is receiving attention, some way may be found of checking these abuses in Tripoli, which have been made known by the local agents of the Italian Anti-Slavery Society, to the value of whose assistance the Consul-General renders grateful testimony.



African Protectorates.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.*

THIS short Memorandum on African Protectorates administered by the Foreign Office includes East Africa and Uganda presumably for the last time, as these Protectorates have now been transferred to the control of the Colonial Office. As regards East Africa there is little to report:

"Peace has been happily uninterrupted, and steady progress is observable everywhere, but agricultural and industrial enterprises have not had time fully to develop."

The progress of the Uganda Railway is said to have justified the most sanguine predictions; it is now open on its permanent alignment, and there has been a great development of traffic during the year.

In Uganda peace and tranquillity have reigned, and, in spite of the spread of the sleeping sickness, material prosperity has increased. The construction of trunk roads to connect the Great Lakes is, the Report states, a subject of much importance, but road making will prove to be very costly.

As regards the Somaliland Protectorate, recent events are said to have effected a great improvement in its prospects. The Mullah having retired into Italian territory after his defeat by British forces, and having made proposals for peace, negotiations were entered into with him by the Italian Government, which, this Report states, "have resulted in the conclusion of an Agreement which, if observed by the Mullah, will relieve the Administration of a constant source of anxiety."

Details of this Agreement have since been given by the Italian Minister, Signor Tittoni, in the Chamber of Deputies.

*Africa No. 3 (1905), Cd. 2408.

It provides for the general pacification, in the interests of Italy, of all the region which is protected by her, and also in the interests of England. The Mullah places himself under the protection of the Italian Government, and pledges himself to allow liberty of commerce, and also to prohibit the importation of arms and ammunition, and to prevent, in the most absolute fashion, the traffic and commerce in slaves.

The White Paper under review ends with the following sentence:—

"In concluding this Memorandum it may not be out of place to observe that of the results directly due to British Administration of the African Protectorates, not the least satisfactory has been the complete abolition of the Slave Trade and the consequent saving of the heavy expenditure formerly entailed by the maintenance of a squadron in East African waters."

This probably refers to the maritime Slave Trade, but even thus the statement seems a little too optimistic. In last year's report of the Zanzibar International Maritime Bureau it was stated that no slave dhows had been caught during the year, from which it was concluded that such offences had become more rare, but there was still among the natives a lively fear of the Arab slave dealers.

As regards the interior of the vast countries known as the Uganda and East Africa Protectorates (the area of which is estimated at 120,000 and 350,000 square miles respectively), while much has been done by the construction of the Railway to Lake Victoria and by other means to close the slave routes, and to put down slave trading, it seems rather daring to speak of its "complete abolition." Three years ago, Bishop Tucker, of Uganda, said that the country was so recent, and the machinery of the government so small and, comparatively speaking, so feeble, that "nothing but a miracle could have put an end to a condition of things so widespread, and so engrained in the hearts and minds of the people as slavery."

When we consider that the East Africa Protectorate runs, roughly speaking, some 400 miles inland, that its population is estimated at 4,000,000, of whom but 450 are Europeans or Eurasians; that the outlying portions have as yet been little visited or known, and that according to official reports the northern districts of this immense territory are admitted to be practically unexplored, it appears clear that wide statements as to the complete abolition of the slave trade must not be interpreted too literally.

Obituary.

We regret to notice the death of M. COURTOIS DE VIÇOSE, of Toulouse, a Corresponding Member of the Anti-Slavery Society.

Pemba Slavery.

THE following extract from a letter written by Mr. Theodore Burt appeared in *The Friend* of March 3rd, under the heading "Progress in Pemba":—

"In the main the movement towards emancipation here is a forward one; there have been many checks, yet the condition of the people is immensely better than it was. There have been glaring cases of injustice, many of them; but at the same time there has been a great deal of justice too. I still uphold what I said more than seven years ago, that till the advent of the English justice was practically unknown, and that those who were supposed to administer it did not know even its first principles. I have not heard of a case of personal cruelty for a long time. The lot of those still held in slavery continues to improve, and the position of the freed men (excepting the cases where there has been a miscarriage of justice, and they are comparatively few) also continues to improve and to become more secure. The locating of freed men on shambas against their will was arbitrary, illegal, and unjust, and could not be carried out. People go where they like and settle where they like.

"It is within four days of eight years since I landed in these islands, years for which we may thank God and take courage. We should have liked to have done more, but much has been done to lift the burdens from these poor oppressed people. We still press on, knowing that our labour is not in vain.

"As to the number of slaves now being freed by the courts I cannot, of course, get any official information, but our own records show that on January 3rd, 1903, a slave was freed and received freedom medal No. 4,967; on January 10th, 1904, a freed slave's medal was No. 5,404, and on January 20th, 1905, No. 5,529. So that it would appear that during the past year and ten days 125 slaves had been freed by the court in Pemba, and that in two years and seventeen days only 562 had been freed. Surely this must be satisfactory to those who desire to see slavery die a quiet and lingering death. Truly it would be an act of mercy to put it to death at a blow, which could so easily and simply be done. The Sultan has gone to England to see the Foreign Office about his coming of age; we hear he wishes to be a real Sultan, like his ancestors long ago. I think he had better begin by granting true abolition of slavery to all his subjects."

We are glad to learn from Mr. Burt that the condition of the freedmen (in which there was room for amendment) is improving, and a letter from Mr. Herbert Sellars, another member of the Friends' Mission in Pemba, gives an instance of a visit which he paid

"to a freed man who had lived at Banani, and whom he had helped to purchase a shamba at Yamba Ngome, about thirteen miles by sea, for forty-five rupees (£3). 'It was then quite forest; clove trees 14ft. high had to be cleared. There was no house near. When I went, what a change, and all in one short year! There was a good house in the most elevated position, and the piece of land nearly all cleared and planted with bananas, muhogo, young cloves, and sundry vegetables. They both looked happy and comfortable, and the estate is now worth more than double the purchase price. I am glad to see this encouraging result of emancipation; it is, I am sure, only a sample of what many are doing, and what others will do when they get guidance and opportunity.'"

The report of the Friends' Anti-Slavery Committee for 1904 is less cheerful in tone, and states that "Emancipation proceeds very slowly, and the whole question is still in a most unsatisfactory state."

The need for and the value of free agricultural labour in Pemba is well brought out in an article in the April number of *Central Africa* by the Rev. Cyril Frewer, of the Universities' Mission there. He writes:—

"The greater part of this island is admittedly equal in productiveness to the richest countries in the world, yet it is increasingly going out of cultivation for lack of cultivators. Most of the Arabs—the landlords—are bordering on bankruptcy, and have no slave labour at command, the released slave population continues to die off, and few of them have children to take their place. While this process of decay is going on, the difficulty in getting in the harvest increases, and the loss incurred by the community increases with it. This year it is reckoned that not half the cloves will be gathered in. . . . If this island is to be reclaimed without the intervention of European capital and Chinese labour, we must raise up a race of industrious Christian yeomen. . . . These are the islands which have been the Central Africans' land of bondage, the emporiums where the black men from the interior were gathered together in order to supply the Arabs of these parts and the East generally with human beasts of burden. According to a report of a Committee of the House of Commons on the subject in 1870, the contraband traffic to Zanzibar and Pemba did not fall short of 12,000 slaves annually. It was to the slaves, and to the countries whence they were drawn, that we were sent. Let us encourage the Christian released slaves and their children to buy up the land of their taskmasters, a land that lies desolate."

Slave Trade Papers.*

THIS is the annual collection of papers on slavery and the traffic in liquor and firearms in various parts of Africa, published at Brussels in accordance with the terms of the Brussels Act.

The papers this year do not contain much new matter that is of importance on the subject; the British reports on slavery in Zanzibar, Egypt and the Soudan, and Northern Nigeria have already been fully noticed in these pages at the time of publication. The annual report of the International Maritime Bureau which meets at Zanzibar simply states that no judgment connected with slave trading or with crimes committed against the liberty of natives has been lodged with the Bureau, the labours of which have been confined to the registration of vessels.

An extract from the report on the development of the German Protectorate in Africa and the Pacific for 1903-1904 runs as follows:—

* Documents relatives à la Répression de la Traite des Esclaves—Brussels, 1905.

"The measures which have been taken and the regulations laid down in the course of the year under review with a view to the repression of the slave trade have been followed by good results in practice. The severe control exercised over caravans proceeding from the interior to the coast, notably in relation to the women and children forming part of them; the rewards allotted to Sultans and Jumbes to stimulate their zeal in reporting cases of slave trading which come to their knowledge; the watch kept on suspected places by means of visits of inspection occasionally made by the chiefs of the military stations; the secret investigations carried out by trustworthy persons; and lastly, the heavy punishments inflicted on traders who have been caught, have had the result of still further checking the trade in human flesh. Only twelve cases of slave trading have been brought before the courts, and no sentence has been given during the year for the transport of slaves by sea.

"The number of freedom letters given in the course of the year has further increased; there have been 2,631 against 2,420 for the previous year. 738 letters have been given on redemption, 930 on liberation, 901 on the official declaration of emancipation; 62 slaves have been freed on the death of their master and for other reasons. The small rise in the number of slaves freed on their redemption (738 against 723 in the previous year) only confirms the statement made in last year's report, that, generally speaking, the slave does not feel the state of dependence which he occupies to be a trouble to him. However that may be, the institution of slavery in German East Africa may be considered as moribund. Its speedy disappearance, by way of Ordinance, will assuredly be hastened by the rapid development which the Protectorate will show, thanks to the establishment of modern methods of communication."

An Ordinance, dated Dec. 24th, 1904, following on the Ordinance of Nov. 29th, 1901, as to domestic slavery, has been passed, by which the children of domestic slaves born in German East Africa after Dec. 31st, 1905, are declared to be free.

From Italian Somaliland we have sundry papers relating to the suppression of slavery in Benadir, including Ordinances issued by the Italian Consul-General last year, enjoining the abolition of slavery and the treatment of slaves by their masters as members of their families. The inhabitants of the territories subject to the King of Italy are recommended to give up the use of the word "slave" and replace it by "servant," not confining themselves to passing the word into their language, but translating it into their actions.

The import and export and all dealings in slaves are expressly prohibited, and masters are forbidden to demand too much work of their slaves, or to treat them with harshness or cruelty, but the general effect of the Ordinances is to mitigate the status of slavery rather than to put a definite end to it. The decree of Sultan Barghash against the slave trade in 1876 is, however, recalled, and slaves in the four chief towns who have been made so since the promulgation of that decree are to be declared free by their owners, who must make a declaration to the Italian authority on pain of losing all

the other slaves belonging to them. Children born of slaves since 1894 are declared free, and slave women who marry or live as *sourias* with free men are also free.

Every slave is to have the right of working three days a week for himself, and what he makes thereby is to be his own property; provision is also made for his ransoming himself by paying a fixed sum.

Another Ordinance creates a fund for the enfranchisement of domestic slaves.

Turning to West Africa, an extract from the report of the British Colony of Lagos for 1903 states that practically no slave cases arose during the year. "The importation of slaves from the interior," we are told, "seems to be extinct, and slavery as an institution is now in this territory in a state of decrepitude."

The Benadir Coast.

As a sequel to the disclosures which were made two years ago regarding the trade in slaves and maladministration which went on under the rule of the Chartered Company in that portion of Italian Somaliland known as the Benadir Coast, it is interesting to learn from the *Morning Post* that the Italian Government has decided to assume directly all political and administrative powers in that Colony. Its management by a commercial company has from the first been unsatisfactory. The territory was leased by the Sultan of Zanzibar to Italy in 1892, and by a subsequent Convention in 1898 the Benadir Company, to which the administration had been entrusted, pledged itself to enforce the Berlin and Brussels Acts concerning the slave trade, the sale of liquor and firearms. In spite of this the official inquiry into alleged scandals in the administration in 1903 showed that slave dealing went on, and that the Company did nothing to develop the colony or even to ensure public security.

The Anti-Slavery Society of Italy, as will be remembered, sent out a special investigator in the person of Signor Robecchi-Bricchetti, whose report showed that the Benadir Company not only tolerated but protected the slave traffic. Feeling was so strong on the part of the shareholders of the Company that a fund was at once set aside for the redemption of the slaves, the year's dividend earned by the Company being devoted to this purpose. The public opinion of Italy was strongly stirred by these revelations, and a year ago Signor Tittoni stated in Parliament that the Company having proved itself absolutely unfitted to exercise administrative functions, the Government had resolved to leave it nothing but the commercial exploitation of the colony.

An arrangement has been concluded by Italy with the British Government, with the assent of the Sultanate of Zanzibar, by which Italy acquires the Sovereignty of the ports of Benadir, over which she has only possessed administrative rights, by the payment of £144,000, or eighteen years' purchase, to the Sultan of Zanzibar for the freehold. Italy is to secure a station near Kismayu.

The Benadir Company will go into liquidation and a new company will be incorporated to undertake the economic development of the colony. The Government will entrust to the company the execution of certain public works, including the construction of means of communication with the interior, which will promote the commercial development of the colony. The latest reports on the situation in Benadir are said to be favourable.



The Slave Trade 100 Years Ago.

A REPORT of the debate which took place in the House of Commons on February 28th, 1805, on the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, was copied in *The Times* of March 1st last from its issue of one hundred years before. The debate is not without interest still, and the arguments used in defence of the slave trade are instructive, in view of subsequent history. The danger of demolishing the system of commerce while the French war lasted and the dependence of the city of Liverpool on its West Indian trade seemed, no doubt, strong reasons for resisting reform, in addition to the usual arguments against "mere false notions of humanity," and a bill which was "all a theory."

FROM *The Times* OF 1805.

FRIDAY, MARCH 1.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *Thursday, Feb. 28.*

ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE.

"MR. WILBERFORCE moved the order of the day, and observed, that he felt little disposed to trouble the House long, as the subject had been so often discussed before, and as the House had so recently expressed its firm opinion upon this important subject, and no new matter had occurred since last Session. He should, therefore, reserve himself for the liberty of reply, in case anything should occur that might call for an answer on his part.

"THE SPEAKER observed, that the Right Hon. Gentleman's reply was not matter of right, except in the case of an original discussion.

"MR. WILBERFORCE corrected himself.

"GENERAL GASCOIGNE could not let the question go by without giving his opinion upon it once more. The Hon. Mover had said that no new reason had occurred since last Session against the adoption of this measure. He should, however, rely upon the wisdom and upon the feelings of the House, upon a

measure so interesting and so important to the interests of this country, to our revenues, and even to our existence as a nation. He trusted the House would not consider any former pledge of this kind as binding upon them now. . . . The very discussion of the matter was replete with mischief. What claim would a native African have on the humanity of the House from the laws or the habits of his own country, to which British European subjects are not greatly entitled? That was a circumstance never to be overlooked, but by the multitude, who considered abolition sincerely as a previous step to emancipation. . . . The feelings of a few individuals in this country must not be suffered to demolish the system of our commerce which had lasted 150 years, and which was so complicated and important to us, and that too in a war which probably would not be of speedy termination. . . . He did not wish to attribute wrong notions to anybody, and he had a personal respect for the Hon. Mover; but there was a certain wildness of imagination that clouded men's minds on this subject. Government indeed did seem to feel the necessity of having a few slaves, since they recently contracted for 5,000 young active men to make soldiers of them, direct from Africa; not those who had been slaves before in the West Indies. . . .

"Sir WILLIAM YOUNG. . . . The worthy Baronet then dwelt upon the state of the Slaves in their native country and their treatment there, quoting the expression of a native Slave-proprietor on throwing the dead body of his Slave into the ground:—"There goes so much money wasted." He conjured the House to consider whether they were not, upon mere false notions of humanity, actually destroying the property and endangering the lives of Europeans? . . .

"General TARLETON contrasted the situation of Liverpool formerly, and what it is at present. Before the trade of the West Indies had grown to what it is Liverpool was comparatively a fishing village. The arguments by which the Abolition was attempted to be supported were founded on the rights of man carried to extremities. . . .

"Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY opposed the Bill. It was all a theory. He had lived long enough not to be very fond of theories. . . .

"Mr. PITT rose to declare that no such contract as that which had been spoken of in the course of the debate for the purchase by Government of Slaves from Africa had, to his knowledge, been entered into by his Majesty's Government. Some suggestions of that nature were received by Government from the Colonial Assembly, but they were rejected; and he utterly disbelieved that any such a contract did exist.

". . . The question being called for and strangers having withdrawn, the House divided upon the Amendment of General Gascoigne."

For the Amendment	77
Against it	70

Majority against the Bill	7
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We learn from the *Life of Wilberforce* that this defeat was unexpected and was a bitter disappointment to the mover. Pitt had pressed Wilberforce to postpone the question, but the latter characteristically refused to "make that holy cause subservient to the interest of a party," and persisted in his motion.

His diary records that he never felt any parliamentary failure so deeply.

"I could not sleep after first waking at night. The poor blacks rushed into my mind and the guilt of our wicked land."

Yet his biographer adds that he had no doubts of his ultimate success, which was in fact attained two years later.



The Abuses in the Congo State.

MR. J. H. HARRIS, of the Congo Balolo Mission, has sent an interesting Report to the British Consul at Boma of the evidence brought before the Commission of Inquiry at Baringa. Of the Commissioners he formed a very favourable opinion:

"We hardly think better or fairer men could have been chosen than M. Janssens, Baron Nisco, and Dr. Schumacher. The two Secretaries, M. Denyn and Dr. Gregoire, are very good men, and we owe the latter a debt of gratitude for the patience and ability shown in translating.

"M. Janssens is a very brave man to undertake at his age such a task. His patience, whenever we desired to put a question to witnesses, was very marked. This applied, in fact, to every member of the Commission. We greatly appreciated and admired the questions put by Baron Nisco, which pierced the A.B.I.R. imposture at every point. Dr. Schumacher we liked very much, as, though he said very little, his sympathetic and gentle nature was obviously pained at story after story of massacre."

Mr. Harris was allowed to occupy the first three sessions in addressing the Commission from notes drawn up by himself and another missionary, Mr. Stannard. The story was one of blood and horrors of an atrocious character, dealing with murders, cannibalism, unjust imprisonments, and other irregular and cruel punishments, excessive taxation and blackmail. The missionaries pointed out that the outrages of the native sentries were, "after all, only an exaggeration of their general conduct," and declared that the responsibility lay with the system rather than with the individual.

There was some attempt to make a case against the missionaries by counter-evidence, but it came to nothing. Mr. Stannard was next examined, and gave similar evidence, and then came a succession of native witnesses. Of their evidence, Mr. Harris writes:—

"Every witness tells of floggings, rape, mutilations, murders, and of imprisonments of men, women, and children, of illegal fines, and irregular taxes, etc., etc.

"The Commission endeavours to get through this slough of iniquity and this river of blood, but, finding it hopeless, asked how much longer I could go on,

I tell them I can go on until they are satisfied that hundreds of murders have been committed by the Abir in this district alone—murders of chiefs, men, women, and little children, and that multitudes of witnesses only await my signal to appear by the thousand."

The Commission agreed, says Mr. Harris, to accept the following as a true statement: "That hundreds of people have been killed in this district alone for rubber, and that I (Mr. Harris) could prove it by multitudes of witnesses."

The Director of the Abir Company, M. Longtain, was present at this stage of the Inquiry and actually admitted this statement to be true, saying that he did not wish to contest Mr. Harris' evidence.

"Where now," Mr. Harris asks, "is the morbid imagination of excitable missionaries?"

"The judges and police officers have already joined in the condemnation! now let the commissioners speak—and they will. They are courageous and just men, determined that no earthly power shall prevent their speaking the truth, even though they may be found in company with English missionaries."

The Commission, impartially as it has acted, cannot, as the Congo Reform Association points out, be regarded as in any way adequately meeting the indictment against the system of misgovernment in the Congo State, for it was only appointed to report upon certain specific charges in certain districts, and the Commissioners only visited a very few places; a mere fraction of the evils complained of have come under their purview.

There is a real danger then that the Congo Government may, by appearing to take certain measures against the Abir Company, endeavour to satisfy public opinion, while the abuses in all but a small portion of the territory remain untouched, and the system, with all its barbarities, goes on as before.



WHY IS THE SLAVE TRADE WRONG?

A concise answer to the above question has been suggested by one of its missionaries for the "Penny Catechism" of the Universities' Mission. In the present Catechism the answer stands:—"The Slave Trade is wrong because man has no right to buy and sell his brother man."

But the new and more fundamental answer which it is proposed to substitute for the old one, runs thus:—"The Slave Trade is wrong because it treats a child of God as the property of a man."



Legacy.

THE Society has received a legacy of £25 from the executors of the late Miss E. M. Jones, of King Street, Wrexham, a former subscriber.

The New Offices of the Society.

OWING to the circumstances set forth in the last annual report, the Committee has had to give up the house in the City which has been occupied for so many years by the Anti-Slavery Society, and the offices have been transferred to Westminster.

The Society now occupies two rooms on the third floor of Denison House, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road, near the corner of Victoria Street, where it is hoped that its friends and supporters will enable it still to do useful work, and carry on the honourable traditions of the past.

But the change will involve additional annual expenditure, and it has been found necessary to issue a circular appealing for increased funds, to which we respectfully ask the attention of all who sympathise with the Society's aims.

The sum asked for is not large, but the whole budget of the Society is on a small scale, and, as subscriptions have for some years been somewhat steadily decreasing, it becomes needful to ask for a wider support to enable the Society to prosecute its still needed task of making known and protesting against all forms of slavery, open or disguised, to which native races in Africa and elsewhere are even to-day subjected.

It is hoped that this appeal may not fail to receive sympathetic consideration and an encouraging response.

In a paragraph which appeared last December, in the *Review of Reviews*, under the heading "The New Slave Trade," the writer touched on what must, we fear, be considered to be an undoubted and deplorable fact, whatever may be assigned as the reason. There does not appear to be the same sensitiveness in the country on great humanitarian issues as there was three-quarters of a century ago, but a certain apathy and indifference in regard to the treatment and freedom of inferior races seems to prevail over the larger part of the community.

"In former days," the writer observed, "the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society could always raise whatever funds were necessary for the prosecution of its glorious campaign in favour of human liberty. Nowadays, although Britain is far wealthier than a century ago, there is no longer the same generous support extended to the campaigners against the sum of all villainies. Why is this? The Congo State, for instance, has been founded, with compulsory labour as its chief corner stone. Its system has been impeached by the British Government; and the Italian Government, equally with our own, has ghastly official confirmation of the truth of the worst horrors alleged to result from its vampire concessions. But the Congo Reform Association is left to struggle on with hundreds where thousands are needed. . . . Where are the descendants or the successors of the old Abolitionists? Have the Quaker bankers and solid men ceased to care about the sum of all villainies?"